

IN THE CLAIMS

The status of the claims as presently amended is as follows:

1. *(Currently Amended)* An image forming apparatus comprising:

inputting means for inputting images;

image forming means for forming images on blank sheets based on the input images;

stacking means for stacking a plurality of bundles of insert sheets, wherein each for bundle has a plurality of pages which are to be inserted between the sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means, in a predetermined order of pages in which the insert sheets are to be inserted;

inserter means for feeding the stacked insert sheets so as to be inserted between said sheets having images formed thereon;

reading means for reading identification information assigned to the insert sheets and generating an output indicating the read identification information;

designating means for designating at least one insertion position in said sheets having images formed thereon for insertion of at least one of the insert sheets by said inserter means;

detecting means for detecting based on the output of said reading means whether or not the an insert sheet fed is for a predetermined top page in one of the bundles of insert sheets-
~~when a plurality of positions have been designated by said designating means;~~ and

discharging means operable when said detecting means detects that the insert sheet fed by said inserter means after a printing start instruction has been given is not the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined top~~ page, for discharging insert sheets onto an escape tray until the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined top~~ page is detected by said detecting means.

2. *(Previously Presented)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said stacking means comprises a plurality of trays for stacking said plurality of insert sheets in a divided manner, the image forming apparatus further comprising selecting means capable of selecting between two types of stacking modes consisting of a first stacking mode in which a same type of insert sheets are stacked on each of said plurality of trays and a second stacking mode in which plural types of insert sheets are stacked in order in which they are inserted on each of said plurality of trays, and wherein said discharging means discharges insert sheets while said second stacking mode is selected by said selecting means.

3. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising post-

processing means for stacking said sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means in a fashion mixed with insert sheets inserted by said inserter means, and for carrying out post-processing on the mixedly stacked sheets.

4. (*Original*) An image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said discharging means discharges said insert sheets to a location other than said post-processing means.

5. (*Original*) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, comprising a conveyance path for insert sheets, and wherein said detecting means is provided on said conveyance path for insert sheets.

6. (*Currently Amended*) An image forming apparatus comprising:

inputting means for inputting images;

image forming means for forming images on blank sheets based on the input images;

stacking means for stacking a plurality of bundles of insert sheets ~~for, wherein each bundle has~~ a plurality of pages which are to be inserted between the sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means, in a predetermined order of pages in which the insert sheets are to be inserted;

inserter means for ~~feeding~~ performing a sheet inserting operation to feed the stacked insert sheets so as to be inserted between said sheets having images formed thereon;

reading means for reading identification information assigned to the insert sheets and generating an output indicating the read identification information;

designating means for designating at least one insertion position in said sheets having images formed thereon for insertion of at least one of the insert sheets by said inserter means;

interrupting means for interrupting the sheet inserting operation of said inserter means when at least one of the insert sheets has jammed while being subjected to the sheet inserting operation by said inserter means;

detecting means for detecting based on the output of said reading means whether or not the insert-an insert sheet fed is for a predetermined top page in one of the bundles of insert sheets ~~when a plurality of positions have been designated by said designating means; and~~

~~interrupting means for interrupting a sheet inserting operation of said inserter means when at least one of the insert sheets has jammed while being inserted by said inserter means; and~~

discharging means operable when said detecting means detects that the insert sheet fed first by said inserter means after a restart of the sheet inserting operation is not the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined top~~ page ~~after the apparatus has recovered from the interruption by removing the at least one jammed insert sheet~~, for discharging insert sheets onto an escape tray until the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined top~~ page is detected, and for further discharging insert sheets onto the escape tray up to an insert sheet immediately preceding a same ~~type~~ page of insert sheet as the at least one jammed insert sheet.

7. *(Previously Presented)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 6, for stacking said plurality of insert sheets in a divided manner, the image forming apparatus further comprising selecting means capable of selecting between two types of stacking modes consisting of a first stacking mode in which a same type of insert sheets are stacked on each of said plurality of trays and a second stacking mode in which plural types of insert sheets are stacked in order in which they are inserted on each of said plurality of trays, and wherein said discharging means discharges insert sheets while said second stacking mode is selected by said selecting means.

8. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising post-processing means for stacking said sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means in a fashion mixed with insert sheets inserted by said inserter means, and for carrying out post-processing on the mixedly stacked sheets.

9. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said discharging means discharges said insert sheets to a location other than said post-processing means.

10. *(Original)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 6, comprising a conveyance path for insert sheets, and wherein said detecting means is provided on said conveyance path for insert sheets.

11-13. *(Canceled)*

14. *(Currently Amended)* A control method of controlling an image forming apparatus, comprising the steps of:

inputting images by inputting means;

forming images on blank sheets based on the input images by image forming means;
feeding insert sheets from a plurality of bundles of insert sheets stacked by stacking means, wherein each for bundle has a plurality of pages and stacked by stacking means, which are to be inserted between the sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means, in a predetermined order of pages in which the insert sheets are to be inserted;
and ~~inserting the fed~~ feeding the stacked insert sheets by inserter means between the sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means, ~~by inserter means~~;
reading identification information assigned to the insert sheets and generating an output indicating the read identification information by reading means;
designating at least one insertion position in said sheets having images formed thereon for insertion of at least one of the insert sheets by said inserter means, by designating means;
detecting based on the output of said reading means by detecting means whether or not the an insert sheet by detecting means fed is for a predetermined top page in one of the bundles of insert sheets when a plurality of positions have been designated by said designating means; and
discharging insert sheets by discharging means onto an escape tray until the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined top~~ page is detected, ~~by discharging means~~ when said detecting means detects that the insert sheet fed by said inserter means after a print start instruction has been given is not the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined top~~ page.

15. (*Previously Presented*) A control method according to claim 14, wherein said stacking means comprises a plurality of trays for stacking said plurality of insert sheets in a divided manner, the control method further comprising a step of selecting by selecting means between two types of stacking modes consisting of a first stacking mode in which a same type of insert sheets are stacked on each of said plurality of trays and a second stacking mode in which plural types of insert sheets are stacked in order in which they are inserted on each of said plurality of trays, and wherein said discharging step is executed while said second stacking mode is selected by said selecting means.

16. (*Original*) A control method according to claim 14, further comprising the steps of stacking said sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means in a fashion mixed with insert sheets inserted by said inserter means, and carrying out post-processing on the mixedly stacked sheets, by post-processing means.

17. (*Original*) A control method according to claim 16, wherein said discharging step comprises discharging said insert sheets to a location other than said post-processing means.

18. (*Original*) A control method according to claim 14, wherein said detecting means is provided on a conveyance path for insert sheets.

19. (*Currently Amended*) A control method of controlling an image forming apparatus, comprising the steps of:

inputting images by inputting means;

forming images on blank sheets based on the input images by image forming means;

feeding insert sheets from a plurality of bundles of insert sheets ~~for~~ stacked by stacking means, wherein each bundle has a plurality of pages and stacked by stacking means, which are to be inserted between the sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means, in a predetermined order of pages in which the insert sheets are to be inserted;

performing a sheet inserting operation by inserter means to feed the stacked insert sheets so as to be inserted between the sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means, ~~by inserter means;~~

reading identification information assigned to the insert sheets and generating an output indicating the read identification information by reading means;

designating at least one insertion position in said sheets having images formed thereon for insertion of at least one of the insert sheets by said inserter means, by designating means;

interrupting the sheet inserting operation of said inserter means by interrupting means when at least one of the insert sheets has jammed while being subjected to the sheet inserting operation by said inserter means;

detecting based on the output of said reading means whether or not the an insert sheet fed is for a predetermined top page in one of the bundles of insert sheets by detecting means ~~when a plurality of positions have been designated by said designating means; and~~

~~interrupting a sheet inserting operation of said inserter means by interrupting means when at least one of the insert sheets has jammed while being inserted by said inserter means; and~~

discharging insert sheets onto an escape tray until the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined~~ top page is detected, and further discharging insert sheets onto the escape tray up to an insert

sheet immediately preceding a same-type page of insert sheet as the at least one jammed insert sheet, by discharging means, when said detecting means detects that the insert sheet fed first by said inserter means after a restart of the sheet inserting operation is not the insert sheet for the ~~predetermined top~~ page ~~after the apparatus has recovered from the interruption by removing the at least one jammed insert sheet.~~

20. *(Previously Presented)* A control method according to claim 19, wherein said stacking means comprises a plurality of trays for stacking said plurality of insert sheets in a divided manner, the control method further comprising a step of selecting by selecting means between two types of stacking modes consisting of a first stacking mode in which a same type of insert sheets are stacked on each of said plurality of trays and a second stacking mode in which plural types of insert sheets are stacked in order in which they are inserted on each of said plurality of trays, and wherein said discharging step is executed while said second stacking mode is selected by said selecting means.

21. *(Original)* A control method according to claim 19, further comprising the steps of stacking said sheets having images formed thereon by said image forming means in a fashion mixed with insert sheets inserted by said inserter means, and carrying out post-processing on the mixedly stacked sheets, by post-processing means.

22. *(Original)* A control method according to claim 21, wherein said discharging step comprises discharging said insert sheets to a location other than said post-processing means.

23. *(Original)* A control method according to claim 19, wherein said detecting means is provided on a conveyance path for insert sheets.

24-39. *(Canceled)*

40. *(New)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said reading means reads code information that is the identification information assigned to the insert sheets.

41. *(New)* An image forming apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said reading means reads code information that is the identification information assigned to the insert sheets.

42. (*New*) An image forming apparatus according to claim 40, wherein the code information is a bar code.

43. (*New*) An image forming apparatus according to claim 41, wherein the code information is a bar code.

44. (*New*) An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said reading means reads a page number that is the identification information assigned to the insert sheets.

45. (*New*) An image forming apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said reading means reads a page number that is the identification information assigned to the insert sheets.